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JUNE 20:16-17: THE ASSURANCE
OF HEAVEN AS THE REWARD
JOHN 20:16-17
OF HIS OWN FAITH

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Biblical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

By
Lowell E. Latham
June 1959

Approved by: Charles M. Hunt
1959

James H. Thompson
Reader

**JOHN 20:16-17: THE ASCENSION
OF CHRIST AS THE PREREQUISITE
OF HIS ABIDING PRESENCE**

**A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity**

**by
Lowell Lubben
June 1959**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

This paper proposes to investigate the appearance of Christ after His resurrection to Mary Magdalene, as it is recorded in the twentieth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, verses 1 through 18. Attention is directed primarily and specifically to verses 16 and 17, which refer to Mary's being prohibited to "touch" Christ and to the reason given for this prohibition, namely, that Christ had "not yet ascended."

The problem is brought into focus when one compares these two verses with verse 27 of this same twentieth chapter of John, where Christ invites Thomas to touch Him. Such a comparison raises the question, "Why was Mary forbidden to touch Christ?" This question leads one to ask further, "What do these passages teach us about Mary's faith in Christ," and "What manner of touching is here referred to?"

The problem is heightened when one recognizes that Christ refers to an "ascension" in connection with (γάρ) His forbidding Mary to "touch" Him. The problem then resolves itself into this question, "In what manner do verses 16 and 17 of John 20, especially the prohibition μή μου ἅπτου, broaden our understanding of the ascension of Christ and of His relation to the believer because of that ascension?"

The Method of Procedure

In order to limit the scope of this study, chapter two will list a number of assumptions upon which the study was predicated, without endeavoring to give supporting evidence for the statements. It will be beyond the scope of this thesis to outline or formulate any complete doctrine of the Ascension of Christ according to the Gospel of John, which, it seems, could very well be the basis of another thesis.

Chapter three will consider the vocatives, *Μαριάμ* and *ἑαββουρί*, which form the background for the prohibition, *μή μου ἔπτορ*. As is often the case with vocatives, they convey an idea which must be derived from the context. As we study especially *ἑαββουρί* in its general usage and as it is translated *σεδάεκαλε*, we shall find that it provides a partial revelation of the extent and content of the faith of Mary. It must be noted here that, since nearly every part of the thesis refers in some way to Mary's faith, a summary discussion of that topic will be relegated to chapter six.

The reaction of Mary to Jesus' calling her by name is found in the prohibition itself. This will form the topic for discussion in chapter four, where we will see that the proper translation of the prohibition must be "Do not cling to Me!" Chapter five then proceeds to a consideration of the Ascension of Christ as He refers to it in connection

with the prohibition, and attempts to further clarify the prohibition, as we consider the message of "Fatherhood" which Mary was to convey. Chapter six summarizes what Jesus intended to teach Mary regarding her faith. Chapter seven presents the conclusions drawn from our study.

The Results

Any statement regarding the faith of Mary must necessarily be an inference rather than a statement of fact, since there is no definitive passage of Scripture which refers to this. A study of John 20:16 and 17 leads this writer to believe that Mary's faith in Christ consisted in reverence for Him as Teacher and Helper, but not in recognition of, and trust in Him as the victorious and risen Lord. With this faith Mary desired to cling to Christ when she had found Him after having once lost Him. But Christ restrained her from clinging to Him, in order to teach her that He must, according to the Divine plan, return to the Father as a prerequisite of His abiding presence in the heart and life of the believer.

From the Fall of man to the present, from the ancient mystery religions, through the clinging of Mary to Christ, to the present enthusiasts, there has been a continual striving on the part of man to enter into a communion with God. Man is prone to use his own innate powers to promote this communion, forgetting that this union is possible only

through the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ and His sending of the Paraclete to be and remain within the heart of the believer.

This thought seems to be a proper application of this passage to every member of the Household of Faith. In view of this important lesson as a part of the complete message of the pastor to his flock, the writer seems justified in choosing the present topic for research.

CHAPTER II

PRESUPPOSITIONS

That we may note the assumptions upon which this study was predicated, and that we may guard against launching out into a course of study which is only tangent to our problem, we shall list first of all a number of important presuppositions, especially those which have a definite bearing upon our study. No attempt is made to give a detailed documentation for these statements.

John, the Son of Zebedee, was the Author

The Gospel of St. John has the dubious distinction of being high on the list of those books of the New Testament of which the purported authorship is seriously questioned. The earliest evidence for the authorship of this Gospel is given in verse twenty-four of its last chapter. The disciple here referred to is traditionally regarded as John, the son of Zebedee. This is a tradition which dates at least from the time of Tertullian, and was accepted by J. B. Lightfoot, Westcott, Godet, and Zahn, among others.¹ It is accepted even now, by Odeberg, for example.² There is no evidence

¹H. P. V. Nunn, The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel (Eton: Alden & Blackwell Ltd., 1952), p. 6.

²Hugo Odeberg, "The Authorship of St. John's Gospel," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXII (April, 1951), 225-50.

that John the Elder acted as amanuensis of the Apostle.³

The presupposition that this John was the author of the passage under consideration is important for a proper understanding of the text. He was a contemporary of the persons and events narrated. He was vitally and personally concerned in this appearance of Jesus. He was one of those to whom Mary ran to tell that the Lord's body was no longer in the tomb (John 20:2), and, although his name is not specifically mentioned, we may properly assume that he was one of those disciples to whom Mary personally related the details of Jesus' appearance (John 20:18).

Since this John was the author, since Mary was given a specific message to convey (John 20:17), and since John was among the first group to receive the message, we may rightly conclude that the whole account as here related is very specific and exact, and that it is written in such a way that it is meant to convey the mood and meaning of the moment when it took place.

The Text is Correct

We will use and accept as correct the 20th edition (1950) of the Nestle Text of the New Testament. Some proposed variants, especially $\pi\epsilon\acute{o}\nu$ and $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota\epsilon$, will be discussed, not because they are textual problems, but to point out their import for the understanding of the problem.

³Nunn, op. cit., p. 7.

The Historicity of the Appearance

We must, of course, as a basic assumption for this study, state as a historical truth the fact that Christ, the Son of God (Matt. 17:5; 1 John 5:20), who was crucified and died on the cross of Calvary, did rise from the dead (Rom. 6:4,9; 1 Cor. 15:20; Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:6). All of the Evangelists are agreed on this one critical point.⁴

Such a statement is not only basic for this study, but it is also meant to counter those who would negate the resurrection by means of psychological reasonings. The critics of the Tübingen school would have us believe that Christ rose from the dead merely in the subjective consciousness of the disciples, and that Christ's resurrection was no more than mere fancy. We here quote Ylvisaker at length as a summary of the mistaken views of the Tübingen theologians. He writes,

The critics of the Tübingen school . . . denied the resurrection as a historical truth. Bauer contented that the resurrection was to the apostles merely a fact of fancy or the product of their own subjective consciousness. In his opinion, it was not possible for the apostles to believe in a dead Messiah. . . . So He came back to their life in their subjective mentality. Bauer's views coincided essentially with those of Hegel. The latter spoke likewise of a resurrection of the Lord, not as a historical event, but as a product of the subjective consciousness of the Church. . . . None of these illustrious writers have tried to explain, however,

⁴Johanne Ylvisaker, The Gospels: A Synoptic Presentation of the Text in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1932), p. 760.

how it happened that the unbelieving disciples came to this faith. Schenkel, Renan, and others speak of the revelations of a resurrected Christ as illusions, hallucinations, or phantasms. Strauss and nearly all the adherents of the later rationalism believe that Jesus' appearance in the flesh was simply a vision which was the product of the emotional tension of the disciples. . . .⁵ This is the visionary hypothesis, so called. . . .⁵

Ramsey provides a more complete discussion of this topic.⁶

It is to be presupposed also that Mary Magdalene did apprehend with her senses the fact that Christ stood before her. She saw Him with her eyes. She was not subject to an apparition, nor was she dreaming. We may here note the proposal of Renan, who, by thinking of Mary as an idealist, in effect denies the resurrection of Christ. Lipscomb, quoting M. Renan's The Apostles, says of Mary that she is

a most interesting study as a psychological creation by a man of brilliant genius. . . . "'O my Master!' she cries. After that the light vision gives way and says to her 'Touch me not.' Little by little the shadow disappears. But the miracle of love is accomplished. . . . Mary has seen and heard. . . . The shadow created by the delicate sensibility of Magdalene wanders still on the earth. Queen and patroness of idealists, Magdalene knew better than anyone how to assert her dream, and impose on every one the vision of her passionate soul."⁷

We may agree that Renan was "a man of brilliant genius," but it would appear that such an opinion of the appearance of

⁵Ibid., p. 759.

⁶Michael Ramsey, The Resurrection of Christ (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1956), passim.

⁷A. A. Lipscomb, Studies in the Forty Days Between Christ's Resurrection and Ascension (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1884), pp. 236-37.

Christ makes of it a "creation in the strict sense of the word. Mary truly saw Christ. The question as to whether Mary recognized Christ as the Risen Lord will be treated in chapter three and six.

Barrett, speaking of the appearance to Mary, does not flatly deny that Mary beheld Christ, but proposes that "its historical value cannot be accurately assessed."⁸ But he goes on to say,

the following points however are relevant in this connection. (1) The narrative is permeated with theological themes of a Johannine nature: seeing and believing, and the ascent of Jesus to the Father. (2) A central place is given to the beloved disciple. . . .⁹

Both of these points we would interpret as being used by Barrett to prove that the appearance was a historical truth. Only his third point, that "the older tradition says nothing of an appearance to Mary Magdalene,"¹⁰ would mitigate against Mary's having seen Christ. He puts it into the area of probability, because, since a second witness is lacking, modern historiography cannot decide on its history.

The Evangelist's main concern was theological, to show that Christ was true man and yet divinely significant as the

⁸C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction With Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text (London: S.P.C.K., 1955), p. 466.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

Son of God.¹¹ Furthermore, although a great distinction is made between the "Synoptics" and the "Fourth Gospel," we agree with Nunn when he points out that the difference between the two is not a difference as to degree of historical reliability, but is a difference in presentation. He states,

Those who accept the Synoptic Gospels as giving a reliable account of the teaching of Jesus are coming more and more to see that the difference between this record of His teaching and that in the Fourth Gospel is a difference in presentation. . . .¹²

It must be made clear also, as a basic presupposition, who is meant by the name "Mary" as she is referred to in John 20. This, we shall see, is especially significant as we study the faith of Mary Magdalene in chapter six. We presuppose that the Mary of John 20:1,11,16, and 18 is not to be identified with Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus (John 11:1), or the woman who anoints Jesus (Mark 14:3). Nor is she to be identified with the sinner of Luke 7:37.¹³ She is rather to be identified with the Mary Magdalene of Mark 16:9, out of whom Christ had cast seven devils and who accompanied Christ on one of His ministerial journeys (Luke 8:2).

¹¹R. H. Strachan, The Fourth Evangelist: Dramatist or Historian? (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925) p. 29.

¹²Nunn, op. cit., p. 148.

¹³Barrett, op. cit., p. 458.

The Influence of the Essenes

Because of the prominent role which the Dead Sea Scrolls play in archeological and textual studies, we should examine the influence of the philosophy of the Essene sect, to which these MSS refer, upon the thought of John as he wrote this passage. We may ask with Mowry, whether the documents of the Essene sect "Throw new light upon the Fourth Gospel" and "change our understanding of the background of John's ideas and conceptual imagery?"¹⁴

Mowry proposes that the system of Essene dualism, in which the "Spirit of Truth" wars against the "Spirit of Perversion," forms the background for John's imagery of the powers of light overcoming the powers of darkness (John 1:4, 5,9; 3:19; 9:5).¹⁵ She then continues to give evidence for the influence of the Essenes upon the writings of John by means of this reference to Baptism:

In view of the intense desire on the part of the Essene sect to go beyond the Levitical requirements for rites of purification by ritual washing, . . . it is conceivable that the evangelist intended to say that Jesus takes the place of the water of purification used by this group of super-ritualists. The Essenes sought to approach God through ritual purity, but Christ shows the way to a higher, spiritual, mystical, and enthusiastic approach to God.¹⁶

¹⁴Lucetta Mowry, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Background for the Gospel of John," The Biblical Archeologist, XVII (December, 1954), 82.

¹⁵Ibid., 83-5.

¹⁶Ibid., 90-1.

We may also conceivably apply this thought to our present discussion. We shall see that our text refers to a return of Christ to the Father as a prerequisite of His abiding presence in the believer. We may propose here then, that in place of the Essene approach to God through ritual purity, John shows that Christ in His return to the Father would provide the way to a higher, spiritual union with God. We presuppose, however, that the influence of the Essenes upon our text is negligible. Cross provides more information on this topic.¹⁷

The Course of Events

The parallel references to our text as related in the Synoptics are Matt. 28:1-15 (especially verses 7-10), Mark 16:1-11 (especially verses 9-11), and Luke 24:1-12 (especially verse 10).

Mary Magdalene was the first to see Christ after He had risen, as the following course of events, as derived from John and the Synoptics, shows:

Early in the morning (John 20:1), Mary Magdalene with the other women, repairs to the tomb, but hastens in advance of them, and to her amazement finds the sepulchre empty. Mary at once (John 20:2) goes to Peter and John; meanwhile the other women come up (Matt. 28:5), see the angels (Luke 24:4), and hear their words (Matt. 28:5). After the women have left (Matt. 28:8), Mary

¹⁷F. M. Cross, The Ancient Library Of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1958), pp. 153-62, and literature cited in Note 12, pp. 153-54.

comes back with the two disciples, who, after examining the grave, return home (John 20:10), while Mary still remains at the grave weeping (John 20:11), and here the angels show themselves to her also, and then our Lord himself appears (John 20:17). After this appearing, which was confined to Mary, our Lord revealed himself to the women on their way back.¹⁸

¹⁸Augustus Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of John (Philadelphia: Smith, English, & Co., 1859), pp. 407-408.

... about the fact that she had lost
 ... She had gone with him
 ... throughout every city and village, preaching
 ... the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, ...
 ... and what was his of (her) substance, ...
 ... and was among those who
 ... when her Master was ...
 ... and when he was buried, she and the
 ... "because where he was laid," ...
 ... the very same spot the next morning,
 ... her Master's body was no
 ... longer there.

We notice how this thought of having lost Christ runs
 like a thread throughout these three chapters of the twenty-
 sixth chapter of the Fourth Gospel. In verse two she remem-
 bered the agency--to tell Peter and John that "they have
 taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not
 where he is."

John 4:1,3.

John 20:11,13.

John 20:15.

CHAPTER III

THE MEANING CONVEYED BY THE VOCATIVES

The Master Calls, "Mary"

Mary was concerned about the fact that she had lost Christ. She had spent much time with Jesus since He had cast out the seven devils from her. She had gone with Him when "he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, . . . and ministered unto him of (her) substance."¹ She had accompanied Him even to Jerusalem, and was among those who "were there beholding afar off"² when her Master was so cruelly crucified. And when He was buried, she and the mother of Joses carefully "beheld where he was laid."³ But when she returned to the very same spot the next morning, she was surprised to find that her Master's body was no longer there.

We notice how this thought of having lost Christ runs like a theme throughout these first 18 verses of the twentieth chapter of the Fourth Gospel. In verse two she runs--notice the urgency--to tell Peter and John that "they have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not

¹Luke 8:1,3.

²Matt. 27:55,56.

³Mark 15:47.

where they have laid him." When she returned to the sepulchre, she saw that the angels had seated themselves in the place "where the body of Jesus had lain" (verse 12). And when the angels asked her why she was weeping, she revealed her concern about having lost Jesus by saying, "I know not where they have laid him" (verse 13). And to the gardener's question about her weeping, she answers, "Tell me where thou hast laid him" (verse 15).

This recurrent theme of having lost Christ seems to be the background of Mary's failure to recognize Jesus. Her urgent running, her return to the sepulchre to recheck her former observation, and her obvious weeping, are relevant at this point also. She longed for the presence of her Master; and, after the trying experiences of the previous days, her mind was now in a state of bewilderment and grief. And so, as Christ appeared before her,

her grief and pain are as a veil before her eyes, and the sight of Jesus as the Living One was so absolutely beyond her fondest expectations as to be entirely inconceivable. . . .⁴

Her Master stood before her, but she did not recognize Him, because she was so concerned about having lost Him.

She supposes Him to be the gardener (John 20:15). We ask what would prompt her to make such a supposition. Perhaps He was dressed in the clothes of a gardener, like the

⁴Johann Ylvisaker, The Gospels: A Synoptic Presentation of the Text in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1932), p. 763.

laborer in the field. Tholuck observes that

when persons were crucified they were stripped with the exception of the subligaculum, the cloth about the loins; Jesus had no other covering than this when he was interred. But this was also the solitary piece of clothing worn by laborers in the field: thus Mary's conjecture is made natural. . . .⁵

This seems very plausible, and would add to the reasons for Mary not recognizing Jesus as her Master.

Since Mary did not recognize Him, Jesus, wishing to make Himself known,⁶ said to her simply, "Μαριάμ" a vocative which stood by itself, yet formed a complete idea.⁷ He spoke to her in the Aramaic. It can hardly be distinguished from Μαρία, which is its Hellenized form.⁸

This one word was all that was necessary to make Mary recognize her Master. The lamb recognized the voice of the Shepard (John 10:4,14).⁹ She did not recognize Him when He called her *γέρσα* (verse 15), but this word of direct personal address revealed Jesus to Mary, as Westcott remarks:

⁵Augustus Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of John (Philadelphia: Smith, English, & Co., 1859), p. 410.

⁶Acts 1:3.

⁷A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek Testament in the Light of Historical Research (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1923), p. 462.

⁸Ibid., p. 259.

⁹R. H. Strachan, The Fourth Gospel: Its Significance And Environment (London: Student Christian Mvmt Press, 1955), p. 327.

"What the word of common interest (κοινον) could not do, the word of individual interest does at once. . . . Jesus calleth her by name."¹⁰ By so doing, Jesus revealed Himself to her. Mary, however, did not recognize Him as that which He meant to reveal, as we shall see as we study her word of recognition, ἑαββουρι.

'ἑαββουρι' as a Partial Revelation of Mary's Faith

"ἑαββουρι" is properly "a heightened form of אָבִי: אָבִי and beside it אֲבִי, with suffix אֲבִיךָ or אֲבִיךָ, my Lord, my Master."¹¹ Westcott,¹² Dalman,¹³ and Bernhard¹⁴ are agreed that the pronominal suffix had at this time ceased to have any distinct force, and that this form could not be materially distinguished from אָבִי.

As it is used in early Jewish literature, this word is

¹⁰B. F. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John: The Greek Text With Introduction and Notes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954), p. 344.

¹¹W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, editors and translators, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1957), p. 740.

¹²Westcott, op. cit., p. 344.

¹³Gustaf Dalman, The Words of Jesus: Considered in the Light of Post-Biblical Jewish Writings and the Aramaic Language, translated by D. M. Kay (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), p. 340.

¹⁴J. H. Bernhard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, in The International Critical Commentary, edited by A. H. McNeile (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), II, 667.

very seldom applied to human beings. It was used frequently, however, as "an address of God, namely in the connection, 'Lord of the World,' יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ ." ¹⁵ In the Targum, $\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\omicron\rho\nu\acute{\iota}$ was used as a title of respect, ¹⁶ being associated with the rendering of רַב־נָאִר and also applied to men. ¹⁷ That the form was that of "early Palestinian Aramaic is shown by its appearance in the Targum fragments from the Cairo Genizah." ¹⁸

In everyday Hebrew intercourse it was used generally as an address of honor, with various shades of usage and meaning. When used by a slave addressing his master, it was

a deeply deferential form of address, the full force of which is nowise expressed by the Greek Σιςάγκλη . "My commander" would be no more than sufficient to render the term. He who was addressed as רַב־נָאִר is thereby acknowledged to be the superior of the speaker. ¹⁹

When addressed to teachers, $\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\omicron\rho\nu\acute{\iota}$ was a title which

¹⁵Herman L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Das Evangelium nach Markus, Lukas, und Johannes und die Apostelgeschichte, in Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1924), II, 25.

¹⁶Westcott, op. cit., p. 344.

¹⁷Strack and Billerbeck, op. cit., p. 25.

¹⁸C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text (London: SPCK, 1955), p. 469.

¹⁹Dalman, op. cit., p. 334.

meant "my great one."²⁰ It was also used as an address of honor for those who were learned in the law.²¹

The only use of the exact form $\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\iota\upsilon\iota$ in the Synoptics is in the Gospel according to St. Mark, chapter 10, verse 51. There it is on the lips of blind Bartimaeus, the beggar. He recognized Jesus to be "Jesus of Nazareth" and "Son of David" (verse 47). When Jesus asked him what he wanted of Him, Bartimaeus answered, "Lord ($\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\iota\upsilon\iota$), that I might receive my sight" (verse 51). Jesus answered his prayer with a reference to his faith, saying, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole ($\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\omega\kappa\epsilon\nu$)." Here Jesus recognizes in Bartimaeus' $\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\iota\upsilon\iota$ more than honor or respect for a teacher. $\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\iota\upsilon\iota$ in the judgment of Jesus here is a confession of a heart filled not only with great need, but also with saving faith.

The use of $\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\iota$, which we have seen²² cannot be distinguished from $\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\iota\upsilon\iota$, is not so clearly defined in the Synoptics. It is used seven times in Matthew and Mark, and never in Luke. Foerster remarks that in using $\epsilon\alpha\beta\beta\iota$

²⁰J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition; New York: America Book Co., 1889) p. 560.

²¹Werner Foerster and Gottfried Quell, Lord, translated by H. P. Kingdon (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1958), p. 107.

²²Supra, p. 16.

the Synoptics have "preserved original terms of address."²³ Παββι is on the lips of Jesus twice (Matt. 23:7,8). He contrasts it with δεσάτοκατε, which He assumes for Himself, in the words, "one is your Master (δεσάτοκατος)."

Peter calls Jesus Παββι twice, once on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:5), and once at Bethany in reference to the withered fig tree (Mark 11:21). In its other three occurrences in the Synoptics, Παββι is on the lips of Judas. In Matt. 26:25 Judas asks Jesus whether he was the one who would betray Him by asking, "Master (Παββι), is it I?" In Matt. 26:49 and Mark 14:45, Judas calls Christ Παββι in order to identify Him to His captors in the Garden of Gethsemane. Judas had agreed to identify Jesus (Matt. 26:14), and the fact that he used the word Παββι along with his kiss would seem to say that the term was generally familiar as an address for Jesus.

Παββι is used eight times in the Fourth Gospel, more often than in all of the Synoptics. It is never on the lips of Jesus. It is used once by the followers of John the Baptist to refer to their master (3:26). Nicodemus recognizes that the one he calls Παββι is a "teacher sent from God" (3:2). Nathanael equates Παββι with "Son of God" and "King of Israel" (1:49). Once it is used by a crowd of Jesus' followers (6:25); otherwise it is always used by Jesus'

²³Foerster and Quell, op. cit., p. 106.

disciples (1:38,49; 4:31; 9:2; 11:8), usually as an ordinary title of respect,²⁴ and always in a sense of growing reverence.²⁵

We may thus far state very little which is conclusive regarding the meaning of $\tilde{\epsilon}\alpha\beta\beta\omicron\nu\nu\acute{\iota}$ and $\tilde{\epsilon}\alpha\beta\beta\acute{\iota}$. We may assert only that they are used most often as titles of respect or honor, referring sometimes to men, sometimes to God. Only seldom are they connected with a confession of the divinity of Christ, and even then, they are never specifically interpreted as confession of the divinity of Christ.

The evangelist here interprets for us more fully what Mary meant by $\tilde{\epsilon}\alpha\beta\beta\omicron\nu\nu\acute{\iota}$ by adding the phrase, " $\delta\acute{\omicron}$ $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ $\delta\iota\delta\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon$." Again we must examine the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel, to determine how this phrase was used, and whether it implied a confession of divinity.

$\Delta\iota\delta\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ is used only once in reference to a doctor or professor, especially of the law (Luke 2:46; cf. 5:17). Outside the Four Gospels, in the remainder of the New Testament, with only one exception (James 3:1) it is used in reference to an instructor, as in 1 Cor. 2:28, for example. Out of the forty-six times that $\delta\iota\delta\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon$ is used in the Four Gospels, it is applied directly to Jesus forty-one times, either by disciples or by non-disciples.

²⁴Bernhard, op. cit., p. 54.

²⁵Ibid., p. 55.

Once διδάσκαλος is applied to Nicodemus by Jesus in the sense of a teacher (John 3:10). In Matt. 10:24 and 25 and its parallel, Luke 6:40, Jesus uses διδάσκαλος in contrast to μαθητής, the student being exhorted to take his proper place of submission to his teacher. Διδάσκαλος is the word used to describe the relationship of Jesus to his disciples by Jesus Himself (Mark 14:14; Matt. 10:24f.; John 13:14), and by others (Mark 5:35; Matt. 9:11; 17:24; John 3:2; 10:28; 20:16).²⁶ For Matthew διδάσκαλος "connotes a definite reserve towards Jesus."²⁷ In Luke διδάσκαλος is used exclusively by non-disciples, while ἐπὶ τὰ ὅλα is reserved for the disciples.²⁸

A number of old Latin witness here inserted κύριε, to show how they interpreted this passage. We must also consider briefly the use and meaning of this term in comparison with διδάσκαλε, which is given as the meaning of ἑαββονί, in order that we may better understand Mary's faith.

From the frequent use of διδάσκαλε we see that "to a considerable extent Jesus was not addressed as 'lord' during

²⁶Foerster and Quell, op. cit., p. 108.

²⁷Ibid., p. 106.

²⁸Burton Scott Easton, The Gospel According to St. Luke: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1926), p. 60.

His sojourn on earth, nor referred to as such."²⁹ *κύρις* is used by vinedressers addressing the owner of the vineyard (Luke 13:8), by the Jews to Pilate (Matt. 27:63), by the son to his father (Matt. 21:29), by Mary to the unknown gardener (John 20:15), and by the jailer at Philippi to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:30). So it is not always a Christological term; often it is "little more than a form of polite address to a superior."³⁰

It was not until after the resurrection that *κύριος* usually implied a confession of the divinity of Christ.³¹

The whole New Testament uses kurios of Jesus as the resurrected. . . . The connexion between the suffering, resurrection, and the divine status of Jesus which is expressed by kurios appears often, without the word kurios being specifically prominent. . . .³²

That *κύριος* was applied to the resurrected Christ can be seen by reviewing several passages which refer to the history of the early New Testament Church. God made Jesus "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). People are baptised into the "name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 2:38). Ananias receives instruction from the "Lord" in a vision (Acts 9:10). Peter proclaims Jesus "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36).

Passages such as these from Acts show that the title

²⁹Foerster and Quell, op. cit., p. 108.

³⁰Geraint Vaughan Jones, Christology and Myth in the New Testament (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956), p. 116.

³¹Ibid., p. 117.

³²Foerster and Quell, op. cit., p. 99.

κύριος was applied to Jesus after the resurrection in a sense which implied faith and trust. Jones writes that the title then

admits his holiness and implies recognition of his redemptive vocation as the chosen one of God, who, because of his chosenness, claims the homage and faith of the Christian.³³

He writes further that "something more than respect is implied here, namely reverence and obedience. . . ." ³⁴

The Synoptics "do not distinguish between δισδάκαλε and κύριε as modes of address."³⁵ Here we note that in the Synoptic narratives of the Transfiguration, where Mark (9:5) has ἑαββί, Luke (9:33) has ἐπιτετατα and Matthew (17:4) has κύριε. In the story about the storm on the lake, where Mark (4:38) has δισδάκαλε, Luke (8:24) has ἐπιτετατα, and Matthew (8:35) has κύριε. And at John 13:13, Jesus recognizes that the disciples call him both δισδάκαλε and κύριε, making no distinction between them.

Summary

As we summarize our findings thus far, we see that they provide a partial revelation of the content and extent of the faith, or mental state, of Mary. We cannot form a complete picture of Mary's thoughts at this time until we have

³³Jones, op. cit., p. 144.

³⁴Ibid., p. 117.

³⁵Bernhard, op. cit., p. 55.

studied the remainder of Jesus' recorded words to her.

Mary was grieved about the fact that she had lost her Master, Christ. This, and the fact that Jesus was probably dressed in the garb of a gardener, prevented Mary from recognizing Christ when He first appeared to her. When Jesus then directly addressed her with the word, *Μαρίαν*, Mary recognized that the one whom she thought to be the gardener was in reality the one for whom she had been looking.

Mary then addressed Jesus with the word, *ἐαββουρί*. This is a title which conveys an expression of respect and/or honor. The evangelist, John, interprets this vocative with the word, *διδύκαλε*, which was a generally familiar title applied to Jesus. This word also expressed respect and/or honor. The suggested substitution *κύριε* would also convey respect and/or honor at this time, for it was not until later, probably not until the time of the beginning of the New Testament Church, that *κύριε* began to be a general Christological term for the believers. Thomas (John 20:28) is an exception, but there is little relationship between the confession of Thomas and that of Mary.³⁶

It seems that we must conclude then that Mary did not at the time of our text recognize the divinity of Christ. It appears that *ἐαββουρί* and *διδύκαλε* "exclude the higher sense of 'the divine Lord'. . . as a recognition of

³⁶Infra, p. 35.

the Lord's higher nature."³⁷ She recognized Him to be the "Teacher who had freed her from devils, whom she had come to respect and honor, with whom she longed to be."

³⁷Westcott, op. cit., p. 344.

M. Thiers: A Biography

This meaning difficulty has prompted me to present a different reading of the text. Thiers' answer was "I am not disposed to read as you have done." I am sure that

¹Ernest Violet, "Ein Versuch zu den 1000 Jahren der Christenheit," in *Die Christenheit im 1000. Jahre*, ed. by Alfred Ruge, 1899, p. 10.

²Ernst Haeckel, editor, *Die Christenheit im 1000. Jahre*, ed. by Alfred Ruge, 1899, p. 10.

³Augustus Thielack, *Die Christenheit im 1000. Jahre*, ed. by Alfred Ruge, 1899, p. 10.

CHAPTER IV

JESUS FORBIDS MARY TO CLING TO HIM

Mary reacted to Jesus' *Μαράμ* not only with a word, *ἑαββονί*, but also with an action, which is implied in the words *μή μὲν ἄπτου*, which Jesus addressed to her.

Many have seen a great difficulty in interpreting the word *ἄπτου*. After tracing its use through the Septuagint and the Targums, and in the Semitic and Aramaic languages, Violet concludes his study of these words by saying, "da 'noli me tangere' geradezu ein geflügeltes Wort geworden ist."¹ Luther felt that he could not fully grasp the meaning of this phrase, considering it to be a "crux interpretum."²

Μὴ Πτόον: A Conjecture

This seeming difficulty has prompted some to propose a different reading of the text. Tholuck observes that "some are disposed to read *οὐ μὴ ἄπτου*"³ We note that

¹Bruno Violet, "Ein Versuch zu Joh. 20:17," Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche, XXIV (April, 1925), 80.

²Erwin Mulhaupt, editor, Die Passions und Ostergeschichten aus Allen Vier Evangelien, in Martin Luthers Evangelien Auslegung (Göttingen: Vandenhoech & Ruprecht, 1950), V, 368.

³Augustus Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of John, translated by Charles Krauth (Philadelphia: Smith, English & Co., 1859), p. 410.

the Vaticanus Manuscript suggests a transposition, so that it would read $\mu\eta\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\tau\omicron\nu\ \mu\omicron\nu$.

Bernhard, considering this variant to be significant, notes that, since the position of $\mu\omicron\nu$ varies, the original MS reading may have been $\mu\eta\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\tau\omicron\nu$. This, he suggests, might be a corruption of a still earlier reading, namely, $\mu\eta\ \pi\tau\acute{o}\omicron\nu$.⁴

Bernhard recognizes that all of the Synoptists emphasize the fear of the women at the tomb (Mark 16:8; Luke 24:5; Matt. 28:5 and 10). But here Mary is apparently without fear. This presents a difficulty.⁵ $\mu\eta\ \pi\tau\acute{o}\omicron\nu$ would clear up the difficulty, for then the sequence would be:

Be not affrighted, for I have not yet gone up to My Father. . . . I am still with you, as you knew Me here on earth; I have not yet resumed the awful majesty of heaven. Do not fear: carry my message to the disciples as in the old days.⁶

In reply to this conjecture, we must note first of all that all the MSS are silent in regard to $\mu\eta\ \pi\tau\acute{o}\omicron\nu$. We ask furthermore, as does Cotter, "Why should a simple and easy reading be changed into one which is difficult?"⁷ We

⁴J. H. Bernhard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, in The International Critical Commentary, edited by A. H. McNeille (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), II, 667-70.

⁵Ibid., p. 670.

⁶Loc. cit.

⁷W. E. P. Cotter, "Touch Me Not; For I Am Not Yet Ascended Unto The Father," The Expository Times, XLIII (October, 1931), 43.

must agree with Barrett that such a conjecture should not be resorted to, if any sense can be made of the given text.⁸

Ἄπιτοῦ and its Related Terms

Proceeding then upon the basis that $\mu\eta\ \mu\omicron\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\tau\omicron\nu$ is the correct reading, we must recognize first of all that Jesus was here forbidding an action which had already begun or had been attempted. The form of $\acute{\alpha}\pi\tau\omicron\nu$ is present middle imperative.⁹ Moulton points to the difference between a present imperative and an aorist subjunctive. He cites Plato's Apology, where " $\mu\eta\ \theta\omicron\rho\upsilon\ \beta\eta\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ (20E) was used before clamor begins, and $\mu\eta\ \theta\omicron\rho\upsilon\ \beta\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ (21A) is used when it has begun."¹⁰ $\mu\eta$ with present imperative is used nineteen times in John's Gospel and Epistles, while $\mu\eta$ with the aorist subjunctive is used only once (John 3:7). Wherever $\mu\eta$ is used with the present imperative, the reply must be either "I am not doing so," or "I will stop doing it."¹¹ So we must conclude that Mary had already begun that which Jesus was forbidding.

⁸C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and notes on the Greek Text (London: S. P. C. K., 1950), p. 470.

⁹A. T. Robertson, The Fourth Gospel, The Epistle to the Hebrews, in Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932), V, 312.

¹⁰J. H. Moulton, Prolegomena, in A Grammar of New Testament Greek (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1949), I, 122.

¹¹Ibid., p. 124.

We may then ask, "What was it that Mary had begun to do and that Jesus was forbidding her to do any longer? To what manner of touching does ἄπτομαι refer?" Arndt-Gingrich give as the meaning of ἄπτομαι "take hold of, hold," and then give for the meaning of the phrase under discussion in John 20:17, "Stop clinging to me."¹² Thayer agrees that it means, "to fasten oneself to, to cling to," but then he translates this phrase, "Do not handle me."¹³ Immediately we recognize that one can easily handle something without fastening oneself to it, and that handling is quite different than clinging to something.

What light does a study of terms related to ἄπτεσθαι shed upon its meaning? We find that κρατέω most properly has the meaning "lay hold of." In Matt. 26:48, Judas instructs the priests to "hold fast (κρατῆτέ)" to the one he identified with a kiss. In Matt. 26:57, we are told that those who "laid hold on (ὅι κρατῆσαντες)" Jesus, took Him to Caiaphas. And in Mark 6:17, we read that "Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon (ἐκράτησεν) John and bound him in prison." So we may see that κρατέω properly means "lay hold of, seize," or "arrest."

¹²W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, editors and translators, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 102.

¹³J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition; New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 70.

Thayer would have us make a clear distinction between ἄπτεσθαι, ὅλγηναι, and ψηλαφᾶν. He writes:

ἄπτεσθαι is the stronger term, denoting often to lay hold of, hold fast, appropriate; in its carnal reference differing from ὅλγηναι by suggesting unlawfulness. ὅλγηναι is used of touching by the hand as a means of knowledge, handling for a purpose; ψηλαφᾶν signifies to feel around with the fingers or hands, especially in searching for something, often to grope, . . .

In Col. 2:21, ὅλγηναι is used in the sense of handling for a purpose. We read there, "μὴ ἄψῃ μηδὲ γιγνώσκῃ μηδὲ ὅλγῃς." This passage seems to convey a sense of growing urgency, so that it might be translated freely: "Be sure not to touch it. Especially don't taste it. But above all don't handle it!" That ψηλαφᾶν signifies feeling around with the fingers, may be seen from a passage like Luke 24:39, where Christ bids His disciples to handle His hands and His feet, to feel Him and make sure that He is not a spirit. In Acts 17:27, ψηλαφᾶν is used in the sense of groping after something. Paul here tells the philosophers on the Areopagus that men often try to find God by groping after Him.

Ἀπτομαί is used only once in the Gospel according to St. John, here in 20:17. Ἀπτομαί is most often used in the Synoptics when referring to those who touch the clothes or person of Jesus, believing that such an action will have a curative effect upon them. Here we refer to passages such

¹⁴Ibid.

as Matt. 9:20; 14:36; Mark 3:10; and Luke 8:44. It is also used of Jesus touching persons to heal them, as in Matt. 8:3; 9:29; Luke 5:13; 22:51. This word also expresses the action of Jesus in blessing the children, in Mark 10:13 and Luke 18:15. This sense of touching which conveys a divine blessing is listed by Arndt-Gingrich as the second meaning of ἀπτεῖν.¹⁵

We have noted that Arndt-Gingrich give "take hold of" as the first meaning of ἀπτεῖν.¹⁶ Nicklin strengthens this by saying that "in the New Testament ἀπτομαι constantly occurs in a sense almost interchangeable with that of the word κρατέω . . ."¹⁷ He refers then to the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, where ἥψατο is used in the Matt. 8:15 account, and ἐκράτησεν is used in the Mark 1:31 account. Since the meaning of κρατέω is clearly "lay hold of," evidently in Mark 1:31 Jesus not only "touched" but "laid hold of" her hand. Comparing this then with the use of ἀπτομαι in John 20:17, Nicklin concludes that the meaning should be "do not continue to keep hold of me." He points out the fact that the women in Matt. 28:9 laid hold of (ἐκράτησαν) Jesus' feet, and that this is consistent

¹⁵Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁶Supra, p. 28.

¹⁷T. Nicklin, "Noli Me Tangere," The Expository Times, LI (October, 1939), 478.

with the Fourth Gospel's *μή μου ἄπτον*.¹⁸

Our comparison of *ἀπτελεῖν* with its related terms would lead us to conclude that *ἀπτομαι* has the sense of "clinging to" or "holding to" something or someone. *θεγγάνω* means "touch" with the sense of handling something, as one would handle a piece of rope to test its strength. *ψηλαφᾶν* means "touch" with the sense of feeling something, as one would put his hand to a material to feel its texture. *Ἀπτελεῖν* on the other hand, being interchanged with *κρατεῖν*, means, "lay hold of" or "cling to," not merely "handle" or "feel."

Commentators have given various shades of meaning to the words "*μή μου ἄπτον*." Goodspeed translates it, "You must not cling to me."¹⁹ Luther says it should be "Rühre mich nicht an."²⁰ Westcott adds that "a desire to retain" is included.²¹ Strachan writes that it means "not merely to touch an object, but to possess it."²² They

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ E. J. Goodspeed, The New Testament: An American Translation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1923).

²⁰ Mülhaupt, op. cit., p. 368.

²¹ F. B. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954), p. 346.

²² R. H. Strachan, The Fourth Gospel: Its Significance and Environment (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1955), p. 327.

agree that, from the meaning alone of the word ἄπτομαι, it appears that Jesus was saying to Mary, "Do not keep on clinging to Me!"

Ἄπτον in Relation to ἐτραφέτω, προσέδραμον

Is there anything else in the text proper or in its context that would strengthen our assertion that Jesus was forbidding Mary to cling to Him?

We may note first of all that ἐτραφέτω is used in verse 16 close upon its use in verse 14, ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω. Lenski translates the ἐτραφέτω of verse 16 with the words "having leaned forward."²³ To justify this translation he points to Luke 9:55 and 10:23. He writes:

In verse 14 ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω means that Mary turned completely around so that she faced Jesus. When now John writes in verse 16 ἐτραφέτω, Mary would certainly look at this "gardener" expecting his reply. Mary was facing Jesus when he spoke her name, and ἐτραφέτω means that she leaned forward and so uttered her reply. The participle is used as in Luke 9:55, 10:23, where Jesus too leans toward his disciples, whom he already faces, and does not turn in order to face them.²⁴

The next step after having leaned forward would be to clasp Jesus' feet. But we have little evidence in the New Testament to show that when ἐτραφέτω is used twice in

²³R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation Of St. John's Gospel. (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1931), p. 1332.

²⁴Ibid., p. 1333.

conjunction, the second use should imply a bending forward, especially to speak in private to certain persons (Luke 10: 23).

Alford²⁵ and Temple²⁶ explain the double $\epsilon\tau\epsilon\alpha\phi\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\omega\alpha$ by saying that it was not until the second $\epsilon\tau\epsilon\alpha\phi\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\omega\alpha$ that Mary looked directly at Jesus. Others propose that this double turning is merely agitation on the part of Mary, and that her grief made her turn this way and that in searching for the One whom she had lost. Zahn speaks of this agitation. He says, "Sie hatte sich schon wieder mit ihrem Blick dem Grab zugewandt, indem sie in ihrem Aufregung auf eine Antwort des Gärtners wartete."²⁷ Lipscomb clearly shows how her grief could have caused her to lose interest in the gardener who gave her no help and turn again to the tomb. He writes:

she had an extraordinary capacity for abstraction from circumstances, and for perfect concentration on a great thought or feeling. She was not disturbed by the angels in the sepulchre. No sooner had her grief answered their question that she turned away to seek the object of her love.²⁸

²⁵Henry Alford, The Four Gospels, in The Greek Testament (5th edition; London: Rivingtons, 1863), I, 900.

²⁶William Temple, Readings in St. John's Gospel (London: Macmillan & Co., 1940), II, 381.

²⁷Theodor Zahn, Das Evangelium des Johannes (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1908), p. 253.

²⁸A. A. Lipscomb, Studies in the Forty Days Between Christ's Resurrection and Ascension (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1884), p. 226.

Both of these views point to the fact that she turned twice to Jesus. What manner of turning this was must remain conjecture. The *στραφείτω* of verse 14 and that of verse 16 do not appreciably affect our conclusion that Jesus forbade Mary to cling to Him.

We may note here that the interpolation after *ῥαψάλλει* of *καὶ προέδραμον ἵψαθαι αὐτῶν* has been attested by a number of MSS. This addition forms a very close parallel to Matthew 28:9, where we read *αἱ δὲ ἐν προοελθόντων ἐκράτησαν αὐτῶν*. This addition would imply that Mary had started up and ran to Christ, perhaps to take hold of His feet. The close similarity to Matthew's account would point to this, that perhaps these early scribes saw the difficulties of the text in John, and, having also the text of Matthew before them, added this as an explanatory and harmonizing gloss. If this were a correct interpolation, it would strengthen the view that Mary was trying to cling to Christ when He said, "Μὴ μου ἄπτον!"

One other point would strengthen this view. We have noted how the theme of Mary's concern for having lost Christ is recurrent throughout the first eighteen verses of the twentieth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John.²⁹ When one has lost a prized object, when he again finds it, he will secure it in such a way that it will never be lost

²⁹Supra, pp. 13-14.

again. Applying this thought to Mary's action here, Lenski writes:

as Mary recognizes Jesus, the first impulse of her love is to seize hold of him, whom she had lost and feared not to find again. Here He is, not dead, but marvelously alive again! All her loss is turned into sudden possession. She clasps him as her own, never, never to lose him again.³⁰

Zahn agrees and suggests that when Mary had again found Jesus, she would naturally want to hold fast (festhalten) to Him, in fact, even clamp herself (klammerte sich), to the one she had lost and then found.³¹

There is little relationship between Mary's "touching" and that of Thomas (John 20:27). In the first place, the word used in verse 27, βάλει, implies an entirely different action on the part of Thomas. This would render improper any question such as "Why was Mary forbidden to touch Jesus, seeing that Thomas was invited to touch Him?" We must remember also that, as Westcott writes:

the spiritual temper of Mary will be seen to be the exact opposite of that of Thomas. She is satisfied with the earthly form which she recognizes. Thomas, having thought that the restoration of the earthly life was impossible, rises from the recognition of the earthly form to the fullest acknowledgment of the divine, verse 28. . . .³²

Thomas doubted whether Jesus had been restored to life.

Mary did not, but wanted to cling to Him.

³⁰Lenski, op. cit., p. 1335.

³¹Zahn, op. cit., p. 253.

³²Westcott, op. cit., p. 345.

Summary

We may conclude that Mary did not merely lay her hands on Jesus. She did more than handle Him and feel over His body to determine whether He was really there. Apparently grieved that she had lost Christ, when she recognized Him, she called Him by name, "ἐαββουρί" and took hold of Him. Jesus responded to this action in the words, "Do not keep on clinging to Me."

CHAPTER V

THE CLARIFICATION OF THE PROHIBITION

Going Up To The Father

Having forbidden Mary to keep on clinging to Him, Jesus' then refers to an "ascension" as the justification of (ἡ ἀνάστασις) His prohibition. It must be remembered that it is not the purpose of this thesis to formulate a doctrine of Christ's ascension as it is given in the whole of the Gospel according to St. John. Here we ask primarily, "What does Jesus say about His ascension in John 20:17?" The connection between this reference to Jesus' ascension and Mary's clinging to Him can be studied most readily after we have discussed Jesus' further clarification of His prohibition, namely, that Mary should give His message of fatherhood to the disciples. As background for our study of the "going up to the Father" of John 20:17, we shall briefly review the Lutheran doctrine of The Ascension.

The Ascension (Acts 1:9): a summary

We here summarize the Doctrine of The Ascension as it is given in Pieper's Christian Dogmatics: Christ died and was buried. Between His quickening (ἐκ νεκρῶν) and His appearance on earth, Christ's entire person, in a glorified state, descended into hell to preach condemnation. Christ

then rose from the grave on the third day after He died, in a spiritual and glorified body. Then during the forty days between the resurrection and ascension, He was no longer with His disciples according to the mode of an earthly, visible body, but He came to His disciples according to His invisible, illocal presence, and so He could appear before them even when the doors were shut (John 20:19). The purpose of these appearances was to confirm faith in the resurrection, and to teach about God's kingdom.¹ He points out that the ascension proper of Christ

took place in an actual upward motion, a gradual rising up of Christ. . . . The terminus ad quem is not merely the coelum beatorum (the Paradise of the redeemed). . . . But the terminus ad quem of Christ's ascension is also the coelum majestaticum (the right hand of God), Mark 16:16, 1 Peter 3:22. . . .²

Ἀναβαίνω - Ἀναβέβηκε

Keeping this background of the doctrine of Ascension in mind, we now turn to a consideration of the "going up" of verse 17 to determine what additional light it sheds upon the Ascension of Acts 1:9.

Ἀναβαίνω is not at this time a technical term for

¹Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951), II, 314-23.

²Ibid., p. 324.

the Ascension of Christ.³ Temple agrees that to translate "ascended" would introduce a specialized term, where a general one is found in the Greek.⁴ The primary meaning of ἀναβαίνειν is simply "go up,"⁵ from one place to another.

The Old Testament "going up" is anticipatory of the New Testament "going up." The primary meaning of ἀναβαίνειν in the Septuagint is movement from a lower to a higher level, as we have it in Gen. 4:2; Joshua 2:8; Neh. 12:87; and 2 Kings 20:8. It is used for the cloud of the divine presence being taken up from the tabernacle (Ex. 40:36). It describes the return of God from earth to heaven (Gen. 17:22). It also describes the return of the angels of God to heaven after the completion of their tasks on earth (Gen. 28:12, Judges 13:20). Davies concludes that "it is remarkable how this Septuagint usage of the word anticipates many of the features of the later doctrine of the ascension."⁶ The New Testament ἀναβαίνειν has the Old Testament "going up" as its

³J. H. Bernard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, in The International Critical Commentary, edited by A. H. McNeile (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), II, 668.

⁴William Temple, Readings in St. John's Gospel (London: Macmillan and Co., 1940), II, 382.

⁵W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, editors and translators, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 49.

⁶J. G. Davies, He Ascended Into Heaven: A Study in the History of Doctrine (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958), pp. 23-24.

background.

We cannot study ἀναβαίνω in the Gospel of John without pointing out the significant role of καταβαίνω in the Fourth Gospel, as Schneider writes:

in der Christusansehauung des Johannesevangeliums spielt ἀναβαίνω ebenso wie καταβαίνω eine bedeutsame Rolle. Der joh Christus ist der vom Himmel Herabgestiegene. Darum weiss er von himmlischen Dingen (3, 12 f.). Er wird auch wieder zum Himmel erhöht werden, dorthin, "wo er vormals war" (6:62). Seine Himmelfahrt ist ein Aufstieg zum Vater (20:17).⁷

This passage in the third chapter of John (3:12), shows that to say "He who ascended into heaven, descended from heaven," is the same as to say "He who ascended into heaven was God," the Son of God whom God sent into the world "that the world through him might be saved (John 3:17)." He who ascended was the one who descended from heaven as the true bread of life, who was given by the Father (John 6:31-37). He who came down from heaven came down in order to fulfill the will of His Father, so that everyone who believed on the Son might have eternal life in the heaven to which He ascended (John 6:37-40).

The expression "ἀναβαίνω" is another form of the broader Johannine theme of "going to the Father."⁸ John chapter 16, especially verses 5,7,10,16,22,28; 7:33; 14:12,

⁷Johannes Schneider, "βαίνω" Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), I, 518.

⁸Bernhard, op. cit., p. 668.

19,28, are relevant here. Jesus repeatedly told the disciples that He would return to the Father who had sent Him; in other words, that He would again ascend into heaven, from whence He had come. All during His life, Christ was on the way to the Father, from the time when He felt it necessary to be in His Father's business (Luke 2:49), through the time when He set His face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), until He gave Himself over to the soldiers (Luke 22:53), and even now, after He had risen (John 20:17).

Commentators are undecided as to whether this ascension was gradual or a progression or a state or a condition. Milligan believes Christ was here "in the condition of one ascending to the Father."⁹ Davies regards the ascension of Jesus "as one of the three elements in a process of glorification of which the other two are the crucifixion and the resurrection. . . ."¹⁰ Strathmann writes that Jesus' return to the Father is not yet complete, but that Jesus is saying here "ich bin im Begriff dazu."¹¹ Nicklin says we should not consider this "a gradual ascension."¹²

⁹William Milligan, The Resurrection of our Lord, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), p. 243.

¹⁰Davies, op. cit., p. 64.

¹¹Hermann Strathmann, Das Evangelium Nach Johannes, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch, herausgegeben von Paul Althaus (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1951), IV, 257.

¹²T. Nicklin, "Noli Me Tangere," The Expository Times LI (October, 1939), 478.

In this connection we may note first of all that ἀναβαίνω as it is used in John 20:17 is a future present.¹³ Blass lists this ἀναβαίνω as an example of a present which has future meaning.¹⁴ So Jesus has not yet (οὐπω) reached the goal of His ascension, He has not yet gone to the Father.¹⁵ He is still on the way, and His "going up" to the Father is not yet complete, although He is fully aware of God's purposes and thoughts (John 1:18). But His final return is imminent and certain.¹⁶

When The Ascension (Acts 1:9) Took Place

Οὐπω also leads us to consider the time when the ascension proper took place. Davies argues that since the gift of the Spirit was to follow the ascension (John 7:39), and that the first act of Jesus on Easter Day was to breathe the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, therefore, "the occasion of the Ascension was on Easter Day."¹⁷ But then a few pages

¹³A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek Testament in the Light of Historical Research (Fourth edition; New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1923), p. 868.

¹⁴Friedrich Blass, Grammar of New Testament Greek, translated by Henry St. John Thackeray (Second edition; London: Macmillan and Co., 1911), p. 189.

¹⁵Temple, op. cit., p. 382.

¹⁶R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1931), p. 1337.

¹⁷Davies, op. cit., p. 51.

later he states that the crucifixion, resurrection, and Ascension are "three elements in a process of glorification,"¹⁸ so that the Ascension could still be on Easter Day. Martin agrees that the Ascension took place on Easter Day, and as evidence writes that "the present tense here used can hardly be strained to cover an event which was to take place nearly six weeks later."¹⁹ But he has used Luke as evidence that the Ascension follows closely upon the Resurrection, and writes concerning Luke:

Luke may often have set side by side in his own mind, and then upon the same canvas, scenes actually separated by considerable distances in time and space. . . . (Luke's) mind was artistic rather than logical. . . . He would feel no need to apologize to his distinguished readers for what to us is a somewhat glaring discrepancy. . . .²⁰

We must agree then with Bernard, who writes that the time for the Ascension "had not been reached on the day of the Resurrection."²¹

Others have proposed that the Ascension took place between the appearance to Mary and the appearance to the assembled disciples. Lightfoot also uses the bestowal of the Spirit argument of Davies, not however to prove that the Ascension took place on Easter Day, but that it took place

¹⁸Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁹A. D. Martin, "The Ascension of Christ," The Expositor, XVI (November, 1918), p. 327.

²⁰Ibid., p. 329.

²¹Bernard, op. cit., p. 668.

sometime before the appearance to the disciples.²² Strachan simply states that "a distinction is made between the appearance of Christ immediately after the Resurrection and His appearance later to the assembled disciples," and that therefore Christ must have ascended into heaven before He appeared to the assembled disciples.²³ "But," writes Barrett, "(John) does not say so, and it is very strange that so vital a fact should be left as a matter of inference."²⁴

We would conclude that the Johannine "I am ascending" and the account of the bestowal of the Spirit at Easter do not tie us to a chronology. If we allow an ascension sometime between the appearance to Mary and the appearance to the disciples, we then must speak of a double ascension, because after forty days (Acts 1:3) He ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9-10), presumably for a second time. But neither the account in Acts nor any other passage in the New Testament speak of a double ascension. "The ascended Savior no longer showed Himself in a visible form to His believers on earth until His return at the end of the world."²⁵

²²R. H. Lightfoot, St. John's Gospel: A Commentary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), p. 331.

²³R. H. Strachan, The Fourth Gospel: Its Significance and Environment (London: Student Christian Movement Press Ltd., 1955), p. 327-28.

²⁴C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction With Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text (London: S.P.C.K., 1955), p. 470.

²⁵Pieper, op. cit., p. 324.

Thus far we may infer simply that Christ had not yet (ὄπω) fulfilled His going (ἀναβαίνω) to the Father. He was still on the "way," to which He had referred so often during His ministry. The fulfillment of this "going to the Father," this ascending into heaven, was imminent and certain, but not realized until forty days after this appearance to Mary (Acts 1:9). How these thoughts clarify Jesus' prohibition to Mary, that she should not cling to Him, can best be discussed after we have considered the message Mary was to convey.

The Message of Fatherhood

"Go! Tell My brothers!"

Having reminded Mary that He had not yet gone up to the Father, Jesus gives Mary a commission. She was to go (πορεύειν) and tell (εἰπὲ). Πορεύειν is a present imperative conveying a durative sense, and εἰπέ is an aorist imperative conveying somewhat of a punctiliar sense.²⁶ So these words would more properly be translated, "Be going to" and then "Tell" in the sense of a brief message of short delivery.

The recipients of the message were, according to our text, τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς μου. We ask then, "To whom does ἀδελφοὺς refer? To the eleven disciples? Or to the whole company of believers? Or does it refer to believers and unbelievers alike?" Obviously, since Mary was to go and tell, it could

²⁶Lenski, op. cit., p. 1336.

not refer to anyone except those with whom Mary could come in contact.

Ἀδελφός designates ὁ πᾶν ἄνθρωπος, those who have the same Father, that is, all members of the human race, who were created by God and have Him as their Father (Matt 5:22; 7:3f.; Luke 6:41; 1 John 3:14f.). Ἀδελφός also is used in reference to those who are followers of Christ, and have God as Father through Christ (Phil. 1:14; Heb. 2:9ff.; Matt. 25:40).

Since Jesus in our text (John 20:17) refers to His Father, of special interest in determining who is meant by ἀδελφοί are Matt. 12:50 and Mark 3:35. Here Jesus identifies His brothers (ἀδελφός μου) by saying that they do the will of His Father. And in the Johannine writings, we note that ἀδελφός also "has reference to the new life unto which men are begotten again by the efficiency. . . of God (1 John 3:1f)."²⁷

Here in John 20:17, however, as Barrett writes, "It is clear that by 'brother' the disciples . . . are meant."²⁸ In Matt. 28:10, a parallel passage, Jesus tells the women that they are to "go tell my brethren that they go into

²⁷ Joseph Henry Thayer, translator and editor, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti. (New York: American Book Company, 1889), p. 11.

²⁸ Barrett, op. cit., p. 470.

Galilee, and there shall they see me." These brethren in Galilee are further identified as "the disciples" in Mark 16:7 and John 20:18, and as the "apostles" in Luke 24:10. So it was primarily to the eleven disciples that Mary was to convey her message, and then also, as we note in Luke 24:9, to "all the rest" of those with whom she might come into contact.

The Message: "My" and "your" Father.

The content of Mary's message to the disciples was two-fold. The first part of her message, that Jesus had not yet completed His "going to the Father," but that He was about to go to Him, ($\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon\iota\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$), has already been discussed.²⁹ We now proceed to the second part of the message, in which Jesus refers to "My" Father and "Your" Father, "My" God and "Your" God.

In Jesus' witness concerning Himself, He had often spoken of God as $\delta\ \pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$ (Matt. 11:27; 26:29ff.; Luke 2:49; 24:49; John 2:16; 15:17,43; Rev. 2:28; 3:5,21), or simply as $\pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho$, as throughout John 17, and in Matt. 11:25f.; Mark 14:36; and Luke 10:21ff. A complete discussion of the Father-Son-Children relationship is beyond the scope of this thesis, but as a summary of Jesus' relation to the Father, we quote Thayer, who writes that $\pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho$ may refer to:

²⁹Supra, pp. 36-45.

the Father of Jesus Christ, as one whom God has united to himself in the closest bond of love and intimacy, made acquainted with his purposes, appointed to explain and carry out among men the plan of salvation, and (as appears from the teaching of John) made to share also in his own divine nature. . . .³⁰

Burton adds:

in relation to Jesus, God is said to be Father in that he loves the Son, intrusts to him a responsible work, reveals to him his thought, constitutes him his representative and revealer, and desires that all shall honor the Son even as they honor the Father. . . .³¹

God is also referred to as the Father of men ($\pi α τ ῆ ρ α \nu \mu \omega \nu$), particularly of believers. Burton writes, regarding this use of the term, $\pi α τ ῆ ρ$, that it is "a title of God in His relation to those who put their trust in Jesus. . . . The term carries with it the idea not only of benevolent love . . . but also fellowship."³² He says further that:

Jesus . . . finds the basis for the fatherhood of God as applied both to himself and to other men in the fact of God's love, understood as including not only compassion and watch-care (Mt. 6:26,32; 7:11) but also approval (Mt. 5:44,45; 13:43).³³

Westcott shows that the Old Testament absolute-authority relationship of God as patriarch of a nation, in the New

³⁰Thayer, op. cit., p. 495.

³¹Ernest DeWitt Burton, New Testament Word Studies, edited by Harold R. Willoughby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 25.

³²Ibid., pp. 21-22.

³³Ibid., p. 24.

Testament became a redemptive relationship.³⁴ We may here refer to Romans 8:1-17, Gal. 3:26, and many other passages of similar import.

The Gospel according to St. John makes a sharp distinction between the different phases of the idea of God as Father. Burton writes that the use of the term *πᾶτήρ* as a designation of God in His relation to Jesus "in the Fourth Gospel almost wholly displaces the use of the term in relation to the believers (15:17; 6:27; 10:15)."³⁵ The only reference which speaks of God as the Father of believers is here in John 20:17.³⁶

We are thus pointed to a distinction which Jesus makes between the believers' relation to God and His own. By the words *θεοῦ υἱός* He indicates that He is still man (Eph. 1:3 and passim; 1 Cor. 3:23; and especially Heb. 2:11).³⁷ In His perfect humanity Christ speaks of the Father as His God (Matt. 27:46). But there are essential differences between the relation of God to Christ and to human beings. Westcott writes,

³⁴Brooke Foss Westcott, The Revelation of the Father: Short Lectures on the Titles of the Lord in the Gospel of St. John (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1887), p. 9.

³⁵Burton, op. cit., p. 22.

³⁶Ibid., p. 25.

³⁷Henry Alford, The Four Gospels, in The Greek Testament (5th edition; London: Rivingtons, 1863), I, 902.

as Christ binds His followers to Himself in this His first greeting of victory, so at the same time He makes clear for all time the difference of being by which He is separated from them. They are "brethren," sons with Him of one Father, but sons otherwise than He is: they by adoption, He by essence: they in Him, He in Himself; their Father is His Father, their God is His God, yet in different relations. . . .³⁸

Jesus was the Son of God from eternity (John 1:1,2; 3:16).

We are sons of God by adoption (Rom. 8:15,16). God is the Father of Christ by nature (Rom. 8:32), and of men by grace (Rom. 3:28). Jesus therefore refers to His Father separately, not combining it into "our" Father.

The Meaning Of Mary's Message for the Disciples

A new relationship between disciples and Master

We have recognized that Jesus never simply identifies His disciples' relationship to God as their Father with His own unique filial relationship to God. But He does here unite the disciples with the same God whom He calls Father, and He thereby makes His God their God.³⁹ Temple⁴⁰ and Westcott⁴¹ see that the use of the words "the Father" gives the disciples a new title in the word *ἡμεῖς*. On this

³⁸Brooke Foss Westcott, The Revelation of the Risen Lord (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1887), p. 25.

³⁹Albert Barnes, Luke-John, in Notes on the New Testament: Explanatory and Practical (London: Blackie and Son, n.d.), II, 396.

⁴⁰Temple, op. cit., p. 383.

⁴¹Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John, p. 346.

point Lenski says that here the disciples entered upon "a new, higher, a permanent relationship."⁴² Mary was to announce to them "the coming and glorious change which crowned Christ's work and established their's."⁴³

Jesus was telling Mary that He was about to go up to the Father. Before He did so, He wanted to show Himself to the disciples, that they might know that He had risen from the grave and was alive (Acts 1:3). Foerster and Quell point out the necessity of these appearances to the disciples. They write,

most decisive is the Resurrection of Jesus. Without it the disciples, looking back on their relationship with Jesus, might at any time have described it by saying that He had been their Lord: but in fact it was a question of His being so still. The relationship of personal ties to Jesus which had characterised the dealings of the disciples with Him was now through the resurrection renewed and sealed. . . . Since the disciples knew Jesus to be at the right hand of God, their relationship to Him now transcended all. . . .⁴⁴

Personal ties between Jesus and His disciples were now ended. During His life they had walked with Him and talked with Him. He had been with them bodily ever since they had become His disciples. But now Christ was about to go up bodily into heaven. This ascension became "at once an end

⁴²Lenski, op. cit., p. 1336.

⁴³Westcott, The Revelation of the Risen Lord, p. 24.

⁴⁴Werner Foerster and Gottfried Quell, "Lord," Bible Key Words, translated by H. P. Kingdon (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1958), p. 108.

and a beginning, the close of one dispensation, and the dawn of another."⁴⁵ No longer would their Master remain in their midst. As Swete writes,

the Ascension put an end to all intercourse of this nature: it was a departing from the world, a withdrawal once for all from the whole order under which men live on this side of the grave. It completed the alienation from the things of sense which the resurrection began.⁴⁶

The necessity of Christ's going away: The Abiding Presence

Was Christ then to be continually and totally absent from His disciples? No, for as Westcott writes, the ascension of Christ was to be the "beginning and condition of a new union" between Christ, the Father and the disciples.⁴⁷ How then was this to take place?

We have seen that Christ had at this time not yet completed His going to the Father, but was still on the way.⁴⁸ Christ's ascension would not be complete until He was sitting at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19; Heb. 1:3, 13), from whence He would completely and continually rule and govern heaven and earth and all creatures (Phil. 2:9-11;

⁴⁵Westcott, The Revelation of the Risen Lord, p. 180.

⁴⁶Henry Barclay Swete, The Ascended Christ: A Study in the Earliest Christian Teaching (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1916), p. 5.

⁴⁷Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John, p. 345.

⁴⁸Supra, p. 43.

Eph. 1:20-23).

It is this Christ who is "enthroned at the right hand of the Father" who is "active within us by the energy of His Holy Spirit."⁴⁹ Christ had reminded His disciples that His ascent to the Father was the condition of the greater works which they were to do (John 14:12). When He told them He would go away, they became sorrowful (John 16:6), and to comfort them He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you (John 16:7)." This Comforter was the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit (John 7:39), whom Christ would send to them from the Father, to guide, comfort, and abide in them, and to tell them of Christ and of the Father (John 14:15-21; 16:1-33).

Thus Christ's return to the Father was the prerequisite of His abiding presence in the heart and life of the disciples. As Lightfoot writes,

the fulfillment of the Lord's return to the Father, and the fulfillment of His reunion with His believers, are inseparable. Only when the Lord's return to the Father is complete does His reunion with His followers also become complete. . . .⁵⁰

The Pauline phrase "in Christ" corresponds to a recurrent theme in the Johannine writings in the words *μετέλειπεν ἐν* (John 6:56; 14:10; 15:4-7; 1 John 2:6, 24-28; 4:12f.) and

⁴⁹Temple, op. cit., p. 383.

⁵⁰Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 331.

ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὸν πατέρα (John 14:10; 17:21ff.; 1 John 2:5; 5:20). It was because of Christ's ascension to the Father that the disciples could remain in Him, and that all spiritual blessings would be poured out in richer measure (Eph. 4:8ff.).⁵¹

As Westcott writes,

the ascension brings Him who has died and risen again within the reach of every loving child of man. . . . Now, when His triumph is completed, the believer may cling to the Lord with the embrace not of the hand but of the heart. . . .⁵²

As His ascension Christ promised, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world (Matt. 28:20)." Christ after the ascension "fills all things" (Eph. 4:10) and is everywhere present.

In addition, the believer enters into a closer relationship with the Father. Robertson writes,

it is not an absentee God that Jesus set forth to men. "My Father worketh even until now." (John 5:17). . . . With Jesus the Father is the ever present reality. . . . The Father's hand is over all. . . .⁵³

This also was to be recalled to the minds of the disciples when Jesus said "I ascend to my Father and your Father."

Summary

Christ, who came down from the Father in heaven, often

⁵¹Samuel M. Zwemer, "The Ascension--John 20:17," The Evangelical Quarterly, XIX (October, 1947), 253.

⁵²Westcott, The Revelation of the Risen Lord, p. 182.

⁵³A. T. Robertson, Key Words in the Teaching of Jesus (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publ. Society, 1906), p. 23.

reminded the disciples that He would once again go up to the Father in heaven. Since His final ascension to the Father would not take place until forty days hence, at this time He had not yet gone up to the Father, but was still on the way. His return to the Father would not be complete until He was enthroned at the right hand of the Father.

Mary was to convey these thoughts to the disciples. She was to assure them that Christ had not yet ascended, but that He must ascend in order to be and remain with them. Christ after His ascension would send the Holy Spirit to them, and they would enter into a new spiritual relationship to Christ, being truly united with the Father through Him.

When Christ appeared to her in the garden, her only concern was to cling to Him. She again called Him her Teacher, as she had so often done before. She did not recognize His divinity. She wanted Him to remain with her as He was before He was crucified. She did not recognize that He was the Son of God who must ascend into heaven, no longer to remain with her as before.

But Christ did not allow Mary to cling to Him in this way, and He thus revealed to her how her faith should be corrected. She should not cling to Him to try to hold Him with her on earth, because He had not yet gone up to the Father

CHAPTER VI

MARY'S FAITH: A SUMMARY

Now that we have studied the various parts of the text, we may integrate the conclusions we have drawn, to form a composite picture of Mary's faith, or more properly, her state of mind, at the time of Jesus' appearance to her. Much of what we say here is inference, for we have no passage in the Holy Scriptures which succinctly describes Mary's faith.

Mary had come to respect and honor Jesus during the time she had been with Him. When He was crucified, she was suddenly separated from Him whom she had come to call her Teacher and Master. When she could not find Him after He was buried, she was bewildered and full of grief.

When Christ appeared to her in the garden, her only concern was to cling to Him. She again called Him her Teacher, as she had so often done before. She did not recognize His divinity. She wanted Him to remain with her as He was before He was crucified. She did not recognize that He was the Son of God who must ascend into heaven, no longer to remain with her as before.

But Christ did not allow Mary to cling to Him in this way, and He thus revealed to her how her faith should be corrected. She should not cling to Him to try to hold Him with her on earth, because He had not yet gone up to the Father

in heaven. Rather, she should be on her way to the disciples to convey a message to them. This message was to have meaning for her also. She would recognize that it was necessary for Him to go up bodily to the Father, for when He did, He would send the Holy Spirit. Then, even though He would no longer be with her bodily, He would come to live within her in a higher, spiritual relationship. Then she would never again be separated from Him.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Mary revered and respected Christ, but did not recognize Him as the Risen Lord. She attempted to cling to Christ, so that she would not be separated from Him again, after having lost Him.

Christ prohibited Mary from clinging to Him, for He had not yet gone up to the Father from whence He had come. After forty days He would return to the Father, for it was expedient that He ascend into heaven, that He might send the Holy Spirit to dwell within the believer. According to the Divine plan, Christ's return to the Father was a prerequisite of His abiding presence in the heart and life of the believer.

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